



In a society where social interaction has been reduced to online networks and nameless companies dodge financial responsibility, it is hard to imagine spending a morning chatting up the neighborhood farmer and catching up with friends while food shopping. Yet slowly, we are seeing this reality unfold. Farmers' markets reassert our faith in the importance of learning about crops, soil, recipes - about farming, food and the return of community. The number of farmers market across the United States has more than tripled since 1994.

The Foodshed Alliance seeks to highlight and promote the importance of sustainable farming in our region. Through programs such as the Blairstown Farmers Market, The Farm and Food Open House and Farm to Table dinners, we draw attention to the vibrant agricultural community which exists in our region. This agriculture which plays an important role in our rural lifestyle, creating open vistas and uncrowned communities to share food and camaraderie, while positively contributing to the local economy.

I have attached our press kit for your convenience and consideration and look forward to sharing my expertise with your listeners/readers when you next choose to feature this important topic.

Sincerely,

Kendrya Close, Director

PROFESSIONAL BIO

Kendrya Close is a Director of the Foodshed Alliance in Blairstown, New Jersey. As Director, her responsibilities include promoting and facilitating several yearly farm to table benefit dinners, managing the Blairstown Farmers Market, seeking and securing funding sources and managing all farmer/consumer connections and communications. Kendrya's passion for local food and activism for sustainable agriculture led her to this non-profit organization which is devoted to promoting locally-grown food and farming. Her bachelor's degree in environmental biology from Ohio University and her extensive work as a plant pathologist and urban forester for the Davey Tree Company are among her credentials. Kendrya lives in northern New Jersey with her family where her commitment to community extends to the national group, the holistic Moms Network, where she serves as a chapter leader and membership coordinator.

Jen Reich is a Director of the Foodshed Alliance in Blairstown NJ. Her responsibilities include program oversight, public relations, events coordination, and facilitation of farm based experiential education programs, staff mediation, managing the Raw Milk campaign, and handling the finances. Jen is a former Director of Operations and educator for Project U.S.E. an experiential education company. For the last 10 years Jen has facilitated programs through Genesis Farm promoting locally grown food and farming to students of all walks of life. This led her to a year's internship on a sustainable farm and ultimately to getting a Permaculture certification. She lives in Blairstown and honored to be a part of a system that is working to a more sustainable healthy community.

Please visit www.foodshedalliance.org for more information.

Contact Information

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COMPANY FACT SHEET

Foodshed Alliance

Strengthening Farming and Community Through Locally Grown Food

Founded

Founded as a division of Genesis Farm in 2001

Mission Statement

The **FOODSHED ALLIANCE** is a grassroots, non-profit devoted to promoting profitable, sustainable farming and locally-grown, fresh, healthy food in northwestern New Jersey. We believe that the future of our health, our land, and our communities depends on the existence of local farms and are committed to fostering a self-sustaining "foodshed" that supports farmers, nourishes people, respects the land, and strengthens our communities.

Guiding Principles

- We believe in promoting a robust farm economy in northwest New Jersey through local efforts and regional collaborations, knowing that profitability and sustainability go hand in hand
- We are committed to providing farmers and consumers with information, resources and services to foster communication, support and activism from all sides
- We respect our rural landscapes and strive to encourage and advance farming systems – from harvesting to consuming – that honors its integrity

Programs

New Jersey Farm to School Network

Annual Farm and Food Open House

Garden State Raw Mil Campaign

Buy Fresh Buy Local Campaign

Quarterly Farm to Table Dinners

The Blairstown Farmers Market

National Audubon Society Stewardship Strolls

Farm to Chef Program

Website

www.foodshedalliance.org

On making peace with food...

I have an insatiable appetite for life. So it makes sense that I have always loved food.

For me, it is much more than nourishment for the body; it is nourishment for the soul. Imagine my dilemma, then, when I was introduced to *The Omnivores Dilemma*. Once I experienced this book I knew I couldn't return to a complacent understanding of food; especially since I am the always on-call chef for my young children and husband.

Knowing I had to take action, I joined a Full Food Farm whose purpose is just that – to provide all of your caloric needs, in an environment that respects the integrity of seasons and is committed to community. For the first time ever, I was full. This farm meets my basic food needs, but also addresses my appetite for life – I am a part of the farm, as are my children, my friends and my community. My relationship with food, real food, has been changed forever.

My goal is to change the world by changing my community. I look at the town where I live only as the bull's eye; my actions here will radiate out. I want every person in our community to get in touch with their food; and I want to help. I want them to eat real, authentic food, grown by their local farmer; I want to introduce them. Some people need to transition gently, and appreciate a farmer's market; I want to facilitate that.

Today, as a Director of the Foodshed Alliance, I can help, introduce and facilitate members of my community to better eating and better living. I not only have found my bliss, but I have found a true self-serving career. I truly "practice what I preach" and feel that I can now really live my passion. I am full.

INTERVIEW HIGHLIGHTS AND TALKING POINTS

Kendrya Close, Director of the Foodshed Alliance, is available to speak with authority on a variety of community orientated matters, including the benefits of eating locally, ways to engage your children in farming, and Hollywood's promotion of sustainable eating (and why that's a good thing for you!)

Eating Locally

...If food is a priority for you – like it is for us! - Then we can help you find the best, healthiest and tastiest food right where you live. Local eating is easy, affordable and good for you (and the earth!). By eating locally you will find that you are healthier, helping the environment by impacting a much smaller carbon footprint, and sustaining the economy in the very community in which you live. Modern day supermarkets have made it possible to get any kind of food at any time of the year, but at what cost to the foods nutrient content, the earth's carbon footprint and the sustainable growth of our own local economy?

Introducing Your Children to Farming

...Joining a full food farm and watching my children pick carrots out of the field and eat them with reckless abandon, to have them understand that the strawberries they enjoy in June, are only in abundance a few weeks so load up, enjoy, because after June, they are no longer grown on the farm, only on the supermarket shelf from some faraway place; to see my husband's cholesterol lower beyond anything it's ever been just in this last year by eating local, farm fresh, un-processed food has been my reward.

Hollywood's Hottest Trend – Farming!

The New York Botanical Garden is spending the summer featuring local food events with celebrities like Martha Stewart and Emeril Lagasse on board for the events! There are restaurants popping up all over the country featuring the "local foods" message such as The White Dog Café in Philadelphia where only food from local farms is served. Michelle Obama asked that an organic garden be planted on the White House lawn. We are doing our part in Northern New Jersey to spread the message, where 6000 acres in Warren County is farmland....1/3 of total acreage. Double from the 1997-2002 census. Time is of the essence. The 2007 word of the year in the Oxford American Dictionary was Locavore. We are on the top of a wave right now and asking everyone to ride along with us.

For Immediate Release:

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NORTHWEST NEW JERSEY FARMERS UNITE: GIVE PUBLIC “A TASTE OF THE GARDEN STATE”

Foodshed Alliance’s 4th Annual Farm and Food Open House Set for September 12th

Blairstown, NJ –The 4th annual Farm and Food Open House, benefiting the Foodshed Alliance, is scheduled for Saturday, September 12th (rain date September 13th). A day long celebration of farms and food in Northwestern New Jersey, the Farm and Food Open House begins at 10:30 am with tours of several exceptional local farms and concludes at 4 pm with a spectacular open-air Harvest Dinner featuring locally produced foods creatively prepared by renowned local chefs. Farm tours will be held from 10:30am to 4pm at four farms throughout the area, each offering a distinctly different type of agriculture and farming.

For the fourth straight year, family farms throughout northwest New Jersey have banded together through Northwest Jersey BUY FRESH BUY LOCAL campaign and the FOODSHED ALLIANCE to create what has become one of the most anticipated events in the region. Director Kendrya Close encourages area families to take advantage of the variety, saying, “From vegetables to flowers, meats to community supported gardens, visitors will be able to get a behind-the-scenes look at some of Northwest Jersey’s most productive, diverse and scenic farmland.” The Buy Fresh Buy Local experience is intended to introduce visitors to the many benefits of shopping for food close to home from their local farms and thereby enhance their health, preserve the environment and boost local economies.

The Farm and Food Open House is priced at \$50 per adult and \$20 per child under 13 (under 3 free). This includes entry to all four farm tours and activities and the Harvest Dinner, a buffet, offering a large variety of local foods, plus children’s activities and live music. This year there will also be wine for sale by local winery, Alba Vineyards. A Silent Auction and vendor tables will also be available. Tickets for the farm tours alone are also available for \$10 per adult and \$5 per child. All proceeds will benefit the Foodshed Alliance, a grassroots non-profit that works to build a local food system that nourishes people, sustains farmers, and respects the land in northern New Jersey.

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For more information and registration, visit www.foodshedalliance.org or call 908-362-7967 or email info@foodshedalliance.org.

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BLAIRSTOWN FARMERS MARKET: UNITING NEIGHBORS THROUGH FARMS, FOOD AND FUN

Farmer's Market provides family fun with extensive summer calendar of events

On July 11th, the Foodshed Alliance (www.foodshedalliance.org) will host the grand opening of the Blairstown Farmers Market. Dedicated to bringing consumers and farmers together, this one of a kind market will feature locally grown foods all grown, produced and/or raised within a 25 mile radius of Blairstown. Special opening day events include a ribbon cutting and community address with Mayor Mach, cooking demonstration by macrobiotic chef Delia Quigley, live music by Maribyrd www.eleven-ten.com and children's activities.

The market fulfills a major role in the Foodshed Alliance's mission to develop a local food system, one in which eating locally and seasonally is the first choice. Director Kendrya Close explains, "We want to provide all residents in our area with a centralized location to obtain fresh, locally grown and produced, meats, cheese, flowers and plant all grown by our farmers here in northern New Jersey. Doing this while meeting your neighbors and helping to support your local farming community makes for an ideal family focused experience!"

Located at Givens Belet American Legion/VFW Hall on Route 521 just south of Route 94. The market will run every Saturday from 10am-2pm through October 31st and feature a variety of local farmers, artisans, speakers, workshops, musicians and children's activities. Please visit www.foodshedalliance.org for schedule information.

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For a complete list of participating farmers and to learn how you can become a part of the Farmers Market through sponsorship, please call 908-362-7967 or email info@foodshedalliance.org.